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Deaths due to dysentery in Malabar.

* 386 *Q.*—SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP : Will the Hon. the Minister for Health be pleased to state—

(*a*) the number of deaths in Malabar in July and August 1953 from diarrhœa and dysentery;

(*b*) whether this death rate is more as compared with last year; and

(*c*) whether the prevalence of an unusual type of dysentery was noticed in Malabar in July or August 1953 or whether the Government's attention was drawn to it by anybody or by the Central Government?

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" (*a*) July 1953—1,797.

August 1953—1,450.

" (*b*) Yes, Sir.

" (*c*) It was noticed in July 1953. The Union Minister for Health and certain gentleman of Malabar wrote to the State Ministers on this matter."

Deaths due to dysentery in Malabar.

* 387 *Q.*—SRI K. C. GOPALAN UNNI : Will the Hon. the Minister for Health be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether reports have reached the Government that a sort of dysentery is prevalent in Malabar and the effect of the same in a majority of cases is fatal;

(*b*) which are the areas affected and how many deaths have occurred up to July 30th, 1953;

(*c*) whether this Government received any communication from the Government of India regarding this and if so, what is the nature of the communication; and

(*d*) what measures the Government have taken to bring this disease under control?

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" (*a*) Yes, Sir, but the effect of the disease in the majority of cases was not fatal.

" (*b*) Two hundred and seventy-two villages in South Malabar in the taluks of Ernad, Walluvanad, Palghat and Ponnani, and 78 villages in North Malabar in the taluks of Chirakkal, Kottayam, Kurumbranad, Kozhikode and Wynaad. Four thousand and twelve deaths occurred up to July 1953.

" (*c*) Yes, Sir. A letter was received by me from the Minister for Health, Government of India, referring to the prevalence of the disease in Malabar and asking for information regarding the measures taken by this Government.

" (*d*) Immediately on receipt of information in this regard, an Investigation Unit of the King Institute of Preventive Medicine was specially deputed to Malabar for bacteriological

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investigation of the outbreaks. An investigation into the prevalence of mal-nutrition in the areas affected, was also carried out by the Deputy Director, Nutrition Research Laboratories, Coonoor. The above reports revealed that during the months—June, July and August 1953—associated with difficult food situation before the harvest, there was fairly widespread bowel infections and severe incidence of mal-nutrition signs in the young age groups. Due to heavy rains, after a long drought, during these months this year, all the drinking water sources got contaminated due to the heavy rains washing the surface soil pollution into the water sources. Prompt action has been taken by the local health staff for chlorination of water sources, and treatment of dysentery cases with sulfaguanidine tablets. Skimmed milk-powder, sulfaguanidine tablets and multi-vitamin tablets were placed at the disposal of the Collector of Malabar for distribution in the affected areas for treatment of cases of dysentery, and for combating the severe types of mal-nutrition prevailing in the area, especially among children of young age groups.

An ambulance van attached to the Headquarters Hospital at Kozhikode with necessary medical and auxiliary personnel and with drugs and equipments needed, has been detailed to work as a mobile dispensary in the affected areas."

Sri K. MADHAVAN NAMBIAR: —" വടക്കെ മലബാറിലെ മാവിലായി, മക്രേരി അംശങ്ങളിൽ മാത്രം എത്ര കുട്ടികൾ മരിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട് ? "

The Hon. Sri A. B. SHETTY :—" I will furnish separate figures."

Sri M. NARAYANA KURUP :—" The stock answer of the Hon. Minister for Public Health to all questions relating to Malabar is poverty and malnutrition which we concede. May I know whether the Government have got any scheme to eradicate this evil? "

The Hon. Sri A. B. SHETTY :—" This is a widespread evil, Sir. Not only the whole State, but the whole country is suffering from poverty and malnutrition."

Sri R. KRISHNAN :—" ചീഫ് മിനിസ്റ്റർ പാലക്കാട്ട് വന്നപ്പോൾ അവിടെ എല്ലാവരും സുഖമായിരിക്കുന്നു; കമ്മ്യൂണിസ്റ്റുകാർ പറയുമ്പോലെ അവിടെ ബുദ്ധിമുട്ടൊന്നുമില്ല എന്നു പറയുകയുണ്ടായി. ബഹു: ഫൈനാൻസ് മിനിസ്റ്റർ കൊല്ലങ്കോട്ടു വന്നപ്പോഴും അതുതന്നെ പറഞ്ഞു. ഇനിയെങ്കിലും അവിടങ്ങളിൽ അരി കുറഞ്ഞ വിലക്കു വിററു നാട്ടുകാരുടെ പട്ടിണി അവസാനിപ്പിക്കാൻ ഗവമ്മേണ്ട് വല്ലതും ചെയ്യുമോ ? "

Sri V. R. KRISHNA AYYAR :—" I will translate it, Sir. When the Hon. the Chief Minister came to Palghat, he gave a rosy picture of Malabar and said that everything was happy and that people were happy there. When the Hon. the Finance Minister came to Kollengode, he repeated the same paean of praise about the happiness of the people of Malabar. Now, it is quite

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patent that young boys particularly and people generally are suffering on account of malnutrition. Have the Government any plan of supplying good rice at cheaper rates and see that recurrence of cholera and such other epidemics is put an end to.' "

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" I do not think, Sir, that things are so bad in Malabar as they are made to appear from the questions repeatedly put on the floor of this House. While I compliment the Malabar Members on their vigilance, I do not think that they should make the situation appear so bad, while it is not the case."

SRI V. R. KRISHNA AYYAR :—" The answer given to the main question by the Hon. Health Minister makes it perfectly clear that staggering number of deaths have taken place, particularly affecting little children so as to elicit so many interpellations from Malabar M.L.As. Secondly, the fact is also there, not very complimentary, that it was the Central Government which reacted much quicker than the Madras Government. In view of these facts and in view also of the fact that even now there are persisting dysentery cases in various villages in Malabar, will the Government see to it that there is a semi-permanent establishment with mobile dispensaries to tackle these cases and attend to the malnutrition among the people in the villages? "

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" An hon Member of Parliament from that Constituency was more active than hon. Members here. That is the main fact. The charge that this Government was inactive is not correct. It is true that a Member of Parliament mentioned something to the Hon. Prime Minister and the Prime Minister wrote to us. We cannot ignore all that. But the facts elicited show that all the necessary steps were taken."

SRI T. C. NARAYANAN NAMBIAR :—" On a point of order, Sir. The Hon. the Chief Minister just now said that a Member of Parliament of that Constituency was very active and that was the reason why the Central Government reacted. In this connection, I have to submit that I, as a member of the Constituency where this cholera and other epidemics have taken place, have sent telegraphic messages and I have also presented a memorandum to the Hon. the Chief Minister. It is not the fault of the Members of the Constituency but the Government did not at all react. That is the reason, Sir."

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" The hon. Member may as well add whether I did anything on his telegram or not."

SRI T. C. NARAYANAN NAMBIAR :—" He did not reply to me, Sir."

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" I took notice of it and took action."

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Sri V. R. Krishna Ayyar :—" On the same point of casting an aspersion as between the Members of the State Assembly and Members of Parliament from Malabar, I may state that a letter was sent by me to the Hon. the Health Minister of Madras and I had not the pleasure of getting a reply."

The Hon. Sri C. Rajagopalachari :—" Letters need not be replied to, but action was immediately taken."

Alignment of Cape-Comorin-Bombay Highways via Taliparamba.

*388 Q.—Sri T. C. Narayanan Nambiar : Will the Hon. the Minister for Public Works be pleased to state whether the Government received any communication recently from the Central Government on the alignment of Cape-Comorin-Bombay Highways via Taliparamba and if so, the contents thereof? 10-10 a.m.

The Hon. Raja Sri Shanmuga Rajeswara Sethupathi :—" Yes. The communication cannot be published but it may be stated that it calls for information to help a decision being reached."

Sri T. C. Narayanan Nambiar :—" Will the Hon. Minister be pleased to state whether any representations have been received from the public of the place to the effect that an injustice has been done to them by the recommendation to the Central Government of the Officer of the Highways Department concerned for changing the alignment of the road?"

The Hon. Raja Sri Shanmuga Rajeswara Sethupathi :—" Representations have been made to this Government as well as the Central Government and representations have been made to me personally by the hon. Member also. We have taken steps to gather information on this question and we will be forwarding the information to the Government of India whose decision will be final."

The Hon. Sri C. Rajagopalachari :—" I may tell the hon. Member that there is a fair chance of Taliparamba people winning in the matter."

Sri V. R. Krishna Ayyar :—" May I seek an assurance from the Government that this conflict will not be used to put off or shelve the construction of the highway? "

The Hon. Sri C. Rajagopalachari :—" We cannot raise an issue and afterwards complain about it. The issue has been raised and I saw thousands of leaflets pasted on every avenue tree. A certain amount of delay is inevitable, as the claim and the counter-claim have to be taken into account."

* 374 Q.—

Mr. Speaker :—" Sri R. Kuppuswamy has written to me saying that he came late and apologising for it. He requests that the question standing in his name may be taken up now, and I am allowing him to put the question."